

27th July 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Witney Allotments Association (WAA) Committee held on 18th July 2022 at 7:30pm at Rachel & Dave's house.

Item	Discussion	Action
1	<p>Apologies Andy Church</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the last meeting The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 21st June 2022.</p>	
3	<p>Matters arising The tenants of the two plots causing concern on Hailey Road have been contacted by BB. One plot has made a considerable effort and progress has been made. The other plot has not improved so BB to send a letter saying that the plot will now be divided in to two half plots.</p> <p>RB passed on grateful thanks from West Witney Primary School for the donations etc towards their Anniversary Garden and photos of the new beds were passed round to the Committee members. The School have said that they look forward to continuing to work with the WAA.</p>	BB
4	<p>Treasurers Report</p> <p>Current balance £13,583.89 Rent reserve £ 5,471.00 Working capital £ 8,112.89</p> <p>RB advised that she had completed the accounts and a three-year forecast. Outstanding rents were discussed with Lakeside having two rent payments outstanding but one of these plots is vacant. The only Hailey Road non-payment also relates to a vacant plot. Newland payments have all been made. The only outstanding Windrush Place payment relates to a change of plot holders from a different site and no rent is due.</p>	
5	<p>Waiting list and available plots There are currently 247 names on the waiting list. BJ reported that Witney Town Council are adamant that the waiting list stays open even though it is growing all the time and new people will be waiting a number of years before they will realistically be offered a plot. BJ to add a statement to the website about the size of the waiting list and the potential wait for a plot to become available. To help with the back-log, it was agreed that if someone on the waiting list refuses two plots that are offered to them, they will then be put back to the bottom of the waiting list.</p>	BJ
6	<p>Site Reps Reports a. Hailey Road</p>	

	<p>Plot 32b is still vacant, and was offered again to the person querying their position on the waiting list. They declined the plot and, as this was their second offer, will now be moved to the bottom of the waiting list.</p> <p>The tenant who had emailed to say that he was thinking of giving up his plot gave his reasons for his decision. He believes his neighbour had cut down weeds on his plot which had destroyed his strawberry patch.</p> <p>As the Hailey Road tenants do not want communal equipment or a shed to store it in, it was agreed to re-let plot 8a, which had been earmarked for the site of the shed.</p> <p>EL to provide the next three names on the waiting list so they can be offered these vacant plots.</p> <p>Plot 36 has advised that they do not want a full plot next year and are happy to prepare the other half in preparation for the new tenant. This was agreed and a time frame of February 2023 was put in place for completion.</p> <p>BJ informed the meeting that WTC have confirmed that they will install a new gate at the other end of the site to help with security of the site.</p> <p>BB confirmed that the yellow shed that had prompted a complaint was not a problem – the shed was new, in good condition and not out of character with the rest of the site.</p> <p>b. Lakeside</p> <p>The site is looking the best it has done in many years with only a few plots causing concern.</p> <p>Four plots have been sent letters asking for weeds to be chopped down before the weeds seed. A fifth tenant has been offered reducing their plot to a half plot due to lack of progress on their plot. The offer was declined so the plot will be monitored.</p> <p>Other plots of concern were discussed including empty plots that could be strimmed to make them more appealing to new tenants. The community plot and orchard also need strimming.</p> <p>Plots 13 and 71b have now been taken up by new tenants.</p> <p>Many of the walkways between the plots are not being maintained and tenants are to be reminded of their obligations under their Tenancy Agreement with a note that, if the WAA have to employ a maintenance team to do this, it will result in increased rents.</p> <p>Feedback was given on the new five-bar gate installed by the landowner – a number of tenants are leaving it open or not tumbling the gate code.</p> <p>Another email will be sent to all tenants reminding them to lock the gate to maintain security on the site.</p> <p>BJ advised that WTC have confirmed that they will install a new gate at the other end of the site to replace the original gate, to help with security of the site.</p> <p>c. Newland</p> <p>BF advised that he had made contact regarding the plot that was causing concern – due to a bereavement the plot holder has been struggling to maintain the plot. Cultivation of the plot has improved but there is still a lot of rubbish. The plot holder is paying someone to tidy it.</p> <p>BF is stepping down as site rep after more than 20 years as a committee member. He will email all Newland plot holders to ask for a volunteer or volunteers to take over his role.</p> <p>d. Windrush Place</p>	<p>EL</p> <p>BF</p>
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	<p>The site continues to thrive with every plot being worked, although the site now has rabbits on the plots as they have been able to get under the gates. Disappointingly, there have been reports of theft of equipment from some plots. This could be due to the gate being left unlocked on occasions by plot holders.</p> <p>BJ has emailed tenants reminding them about locking the gate and also that watering direct from a hosepipe is not permitted.</p>	
7	<p>Items for Discussion</p> <p>1. Purchase of new laptop for use by WAA Secretary agreed as existing laptop is slow and unreliable. DB to organise.</p> <p>2. Following the WTC decision that the waiting list is to remain open, it was agreed to contact everyone on the list prior to January 2022 to see if they still want a plot. EL and DN will contact by phone and, if no reply by phone, will send an email. If there is no reply to the phone call or email within 21 days, the name will be removed from the waiting list.</p> <p>3. The Council have re-iterated that they are looking really seriously at buying new land for more allotment sites. The WAA will continue pushing WTC to provide more allotment sites.</p> <p>4. It was agreed to re-visit the Terms and Conditions at another meeting, including the WAA stance on watering of plots and water bills being paid by tenants. BJ to email plot holders at Windrush Place to make it clear that water bills for the site will be split equally between tenants.</p> <p>5. WTC have indicated that they are happy for the WAA to increase rents and this will be discussed further at a future meeting and at the AGM.</p> <p>6. Quotes have been received from two firms in relation to equipment servicing and repairs. The first quote was from Steve Stokes who had quoted £25 per hour whilst Witney Plant Hire quoted £44 per hour. The committee voted to accept Steve Stokes' quote – BJ abstained from the vote. Gardening services were also discussed because of the lack of volunteers to carry out gardening and maintenance of communal areas on the sites. Steve Stokes has quoted £20 / £25 per man hour for gardening services. BJ to get a second quote for comparison and a decision will be made at the next meeting.</p>	<p>DB</p> <p>EL / DN</p> <p>BJ</p> <p>BJ</p>
8	<p>Structure Applications:</p> <p>No structure applications were made.</p>	
9	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>RB confirmed that she wishes to step down as Treasurer of the WAA and would like to hand over to a new Treasurer before the end of the year. BJ has the details of someone who may be interested in the role and he will send their details to RB so that they can make contact.</p> <p>With regards to the ongoing problem with a tenant on Hailey Road, the original letter has been found but the content means that it cannot be used to send a second warning letter. BJ to send a letter from the WAA Chairman as</p>	<p>BJ</p> <p>BJ</p>

	a first warning but stating that if there are any more complaints their tenancy will be terminated.	
10	Date of Next Meeting. 16 th August 2022 at Dave & Rachel's house.	

B Jessel

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Chairman of the Witney Allotments Association (WAA)